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WEARDALE

Rural District Council

MINISTRY OF HEALTH LIBRARY

ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

Medical Officer of Health

For the Year 1952

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Lintone, Printers, Church Street

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WEARDALE RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL.

Report of Medical Officer of Health for 1952.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Herewith I beg to submit my Annual Report for the year 1952:-

SECTION A.

Statistics and Social Conditions:

Area of District — —	99,652 acres
Registrar-General's estimate of population	9,099
Number of inhabited houses at end of year	3,068
Rateable Value — —	£54,577
Sum represented by a penny rate —	£196 15s. 10d.

Employment

The general employment in the district has remained high throughout the year.

The making of steel at Wolsingham, the mining of fluorspar and the quarrying of limestone and ganister give employment to the greatest number of people in the district.

Fluorspar is still mined at Stanhope, Rookhope, Cambokeels, Upper Weardale and Blanchland.

Limestone is quarried at Stanhope, Frosterley, Eastgate and Westgate and ganister is quarried at Weatherhill and Harthope.

All these continue to give a high rate of employment.

Agricultural lime is produced by burning and crushing at Hope Level, Stanhope and at Broadwood, Frosterley.

VITAL STATISTICS

BIRTHS

There were 99 total births (alive and still) :-

Live Births	...	98
Still Births	...	1
		99.

LIVE BIRTHS

	Male	Female
Legitimate	49	45
Illegitimate	2	2
	51	47.

STILL BIRTHS

	Male	Female
Legitimate	.0	1
Illegitimate	0	0
	0	1

On an estimated population of 9,099 these figures give the following rates per 1,000 population:-

Total Births	...	10.88
Live Births	...	10.77
Still Births	...	0.108

The rates for England and Wales were:-

Live Births	...	15.3
Still Births	...	0.35

The birth rate for the Area has again fallen, being 12.22 in 1951.

DEATHS

The number of deaths registered as pertaining to this district were:-

Males	...	58
Females	...	67
Total	..	125

These figures give a total death rate per 1,000 population of 13.73 compared with 18.03 for the year 1951. The death rate for England and Wales was 11.3 per 1,000 population.

MATERNAL DEATHS

There were no maternal deaths during the year.

INFANTILE DEATHS

All causes under one year:-

These numbered 2 and were as follows:

	Male	Female
Legitimate	1	1
Illegitimate	0	0
Total	1	1

DEATHS OF INFANTS under 4 weeks:-

There were 2 such deaths:

	Male	Female
Legitimate	1	1
Illegitimate	0	0
Total	1	1

These figures give an Infant Mortality Rate, per 1,000 Live Births of 20.2.

The rate for England and Wales is 27.6, a decrease of 2.0 on the previous year.

DEATHS FROM CANCER.

These numbered 20, which represents 16.0 per cent of all deaths and a cancer rate of 2.19 per 1,000 population.

DEATHS FROM MEASLES	Nil
DEATHS FROM WHOOPING COUGH	Nil
DEATHS FROM ENTERITIS AND DIARRHOEA (Under 2 years)	Nil

CAUSES OF DEATHS

	CAUSES OF DEATH	Males.	Females.
	All Causes	58	67
1	Tuberculosis, Respiratory	1	1
2	Tuberculosis Other	0	0
3	Syphilitic Diseases...	0	0
4	Diphtheria	0	0
5	Whooping Cough	0	0
6	Meningococcal Infections	0	0
7	Acute Poliomyelitis	0	0
8	Measles	0	0
9	Other Infective & Parasitic Diseases ..	0	0
10	Malignant Neoplasm, Stomach ...	2	0
11	Malignant Neoplasm, Lung, Bronchus ..	1	0
12	Malignant Neoplasm, Breast	0	1
13	Malignant Neoplasm, Uterus	0	0
14	Other Malignant & Lymphatic Neoplasms	6	10
15	Leukæmia, Aleukæmia	0	0
16	Diabetes	0	0
17	Vascular Lesions of Nervous System ...	17	18
18	Coronary Disease, Angina	12	8
19	Hypertension with Heart Disease ...	1	1
20	Other Heart Diseases ...	6	10
21	Other circulatory Diseases	1	1
22	Influenza	0	1
23	Pneumonia	1	2
24	Bronchitis	3	2
25	Other Diseases of the Respiratory System	1	0
26	Ulcer of Stomach & Duodenum ...	1	0
27	Gastritis, Enteritis and Diarrhoea ...	0	0
28	Nephritis and Nephrosis	0	0
29	Hyperplasia of Prostate	0	0
30	Pregnancy, Childbirth, Abortion ...	0	0
31	Congenital Malformations	0	0
32	Other Defined and Ill-defined Diseases .	5	9
33	Motor Vehicle Accidents	0	0
34	All Other Accidents	0	1
35	Suicide	0	2
36	Homicide and Operations of War ...	0	0
	Total	58	67

Appended are the birth rates and death rates for the preceding seven years:-

	Birthrate	Deathrate
1945	11.4	10.8
1946	17.3	14.1
1947	17.3	14.1
1948	12.8	12.3
1949	14.06	12.4
1950	13.1	15.05
1951	12.2	18.03
1952	10.88	13.73

Out of the 125 total deaths, 76 were people aged 70 and over and of these 23 were aged 80 and over.

SECTION B.

General Provision of Health Services

PUBLIC HEALTH STAFF

MEDICAL.

Medical Officer of Health (part-time)
DONALD THOMSON, O.B.E., M.B.

Tuberculosis Medical Officer
Venereal Diseases Medical Officer
School Medical Officer
Maternity & Child Welfare Medical Officer
Obstetric Consultants
} Under Durham County Council

OTHERS

Sanitary Inspector,
R. G. SUDDICK, Cert. R.S.I., Lond., (whole time)

Health Visitor
Vetinary Surgeon
Public Analyst
} Under Durham County Council.

LABORATORY FACILITIES.

Bacteriological examinations of sputum, throat swabs and blood for diagnosis of Tuberculosis, Diphtheria and Typhoid-Fever are carried out at the Public Health Laboratories, Ponteland Road, Newcastle-on-Tyne, 5. In addition, other examinations are carried out when necessary, e.g., Examinations of urine and faeces and virulence tests.

Every practitioner in the District can make use of these facilities and a copy of every report is sent to the Medical Officer of Health.

During the year 45 such examinations were carried out.

AMBULANCE FACILITIES.

The greater part of the district is served through the Ambulance Control Office, Bishop Auckland (Tel. No. Bishop Auckland 810). Two Ambulance Cars are stationed at St. John's Chapel.

The villages of Hunstanworth and Edmundbyers are served from the Ambulance Control Office at Consett (Tel. No. Consett 411).

At Wolsingham the Wolsingham Steel Company still retain their own ambulance car for the use of their employees and dependents.

NURSING IN THE HOME.

The whole of the Area, with the exception of Stanhope and the sparsely inhabited neighbourhood of Hunstanworth, is provided with district Nurse-Midwives, working under local Nursing Associations. These are all affiliated to and subsidised by the Durham County Nursing Association. At Stanhope the general nursing is done by a district nurse who is not maternity trained. Maternity cases are attended by the County Council Midwife stationed at Frosterley.

At Hunstanworth, a local Association subscribes to the neighbouring association in Northumberland and thus have the services of the Carterway Heads Nurse Midwife when required.

TREATMENT CENTRES.

Maternity and Child Welfare centres are in operation at Wolsingham, Stanhope and St. John's Chapel. A Venereal Diseases Clinic at Durham and a Tuberculosis Clinic at Bishop Auckland are available for the District. These are all under County Council control.

HOSPITALS.

There is no general hospital in the district.

The district is now served largely by the General Hospitals at Bishop Auckland and Shotley Bridge.

Special cases are sent to the Royal Victoria Infirmary and the General Hospital at Newcastle-on-Tyne; Dryburn Hospital and Durham County Hospital in Durham City.

Cases of Infectious Disease are now removed to Tindale Crescent Hospital in Bishop Auckland.

SECTION C.

Sanitary Circumstances and General Provisions of Health Services in the Area.

WATER SUPPLIES

The summer drought caused the spring supplies to dry up considerably, but after requests to consumers for economy in the use of water, no serious shortage arose.

The following extensions and improvements were carried out:-

Stanhope	- Extension of 3in. main to supply new houses at Ashcroft (a distance of approximately 160 yards)
Stanhope	- Erection of Steel Storage Tank at Keepers Lodge.
Frosterley	- Extension of 3in. main to supply new houses at Westfield (a distance of approximately 255 yards)
Ireshopeburn	- Extension of 3in. main from Weardale House to Coronation Crossing to link up with supply to Weardale Guest House (a distance of approximately 230 yards).

Repairs to mains and services were carried out by your workmen on 130 instances.

SEWERAGE AND DRAINAGE

Minor improvements, including digging over and re-levelling land used for treatment, re-arrangement of feeder channels and clearing and relaying land drains were carried out at the various sewage works. 31 stoppages in sewers and 23 in drains were cleared by your workmen.

Interviews and inspections were carried out in co-operation with the Council's Consulting Engineer, for the preparation of schemes for Sewerage and Sewage Disposal under the Rural Water Supplies and Sewerage Act 1944.

RIVERS AND STREAMS

Consultations and inspections were carried out in conjunction with the Inspector of the Wear and Tees River Board.

CLOSET ACCOMODATION

Thirteen applicants took advantage of the Council's scheme allowing a grant up to a maximum of £12 for converting existing sanitary accommodation to the water carriage system, 14 dry closets were so converted.

The closets of each type at the end of the year were:-

Water Closets	-	1698
Ash Closets	-	813
Ashpit-Privies	-	242

PUBLIC CLEANSING - REFUSE REMOVAL

Apart from the outlying properties, the greater part of your Area is covered by the Cleansing Service.

The estimated weight of refuse removed during the year was 4,211 tons and the mileage covered by the vehicles was 16,421. The total cost of the Cleansing Services during the year was £4,901.

Refuse was disposed of at the main tip at Frosterley and also at Crawleyside, Cowshill, Rookhope, Edmundbyers and Tow Law.

RATS & MICE DESTRUCTION ACTS

The Rodent Officer has been fully engaged during the year when systematic treatment of dwelling houses, business premises, refuse tips, sewers and sewer fields was carried out.

Summary of year's work:-

	Number of Baiting Points	Number of Baiting Points where poison taken
Sewers	368	19
Sewer Fields	103	43
Refuse Tips	131	73
Houses and Business Premises	1302	451

SHOPS ACT - Ventilation and Temperature

Inspections have been carried out and nc action was found necessary.

ICE CREAM REGULATIONS

Inspections were carried out in connection with the storing and selling of ice-cream.

SMOKE ABATEMENT

No action was found necessary during the year - the district having few industries of the type usually associated with smoke nuisance.

SANITARY INSPECTION OF THE AREA

Nature of Inspections	Number	Notices Informal	Notices Formal	Complied with
Infectious Diseases	5	0	0	0
Disinfection	6	0	0	0
Nuisances	4	1	0	1
Dwellings	85	9	0	9
Sanitary Accommodation	39	14	0	14
Water Supply	106	2	0	2
House Drainage	38	10	0	10

INSPECTION AND SUPERVISION OF FOOD

Meat and Other Foods

No slaughtering for sale is done in the district under existing conditions.

Visits have been carried out to shops and stores in the district and these are generally well kept.

Food was condemned as unfit for sale on 17 instances, in each case the food was surrendered voluntarily.

There are four bakehouses in the district. These are satisfactory.

FACTORIES ACTS

Inspections were carried out under the Factories Acts. A sample of the drinking water used at one industrial undertaking was taken and sent for analysis and found satisfactory.

SECTION D.

HOUSING

(a) By Contract

54 traditional type houses were completed and occupied during the year, as follows:-

Wolsingham	...	22
Stanhope	...	13
Frosterley	...	16
St. John's Chapel	...	3

68 houses were also under course of construction:-

Wolsingham	...	23
Frosterley	...	23
Stanhope	...	16
Rookhope	...	6

(b) By Direct Labour

The Council did not undertake the erection of any new houses by Direct Labour during the year. 27 cottages at Stanhope, which were purchased by the Council were in the course of being altered and repaired.

Works on site preparation by the construction of roads and sewers was further advanced at Wolsingham, Frosterley, St. John's Chapel and Wearhead.

The total number of houses erected under the Council's housing programme in the post-war period to the 31st December, 1952 is 243.

(c) By Private Enterprise

Four houses (3 at Wolsingham and 1 at Frosterley) were completed and occupied and three houses (2 at Stanhope and 1 at Wolsingham) were in course of erection.,

SECTION E.

Prevalence of, and control over, Infectious Disease

I receivel 326 notifications during the year, these were as follows:-

Disease	Total cases notified	Cases admitted to Hospital	Deaths
Smallpox	0	0	0
Scarlet Fever	9	3	0
Pneumonia	3	0	3
Measles	293	0	0
Diphtheria	0	0	0
Erysipelas	6	0	0
Whooping Cough	14	0	0
Para-Typhoid Fever	0	0	0
Puerperal Fever	0	0	0
Puerperal Pyrexia	0	0	0
Meningitis	0	0	0
Poliomyelitis (Paralytic)	0	0	0
Dysentery	0	0	0
Enteric Fever	0	0	0
Meningococcal Infection	0	0	0
Food Poisoning	0	0	0
Acute Encephalitis	1	0	0
	326	10	3

The epidemic of Measles which began in Wolsingham towards the end of 1951 slowly spread throughout the district during the whole of 1952, giving a total of 293 cases during the year.

TUBERCULOSIS

Age Periods.	New Cases.				Deaths.			
	Respiratory		Non-Respiratory		Respiratory		Non-Respiratory	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
Under 1 year		-	-	-		-	-	-
1 to 4 years ...	-	1	-	-	-	-		-
5 to 14 years ...	-	-	-	1		-	-	-
15 to 24 years ...	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
25 to 34 years ...	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
35 to 44 years ...	2	2	1	-	-	-	-	-
45 to 54 years ...	-		-	-	-	-	-	-
55 to 64 years ..	1	-	-	-	1	1	-	-
65 and over ...		-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Totals ...	3	3	1	1	1	1	-	-

Under the Public Health (Tuberculosis) Regulations 1952, which came into force on the 1st May 1952, it is no longer required for the register of notifications to be kept, but this has been maintained for information and from the records the number of cases at the end of the year was as follows :-

	Respiratory	Non Respiratory
Males	44	24
Females	40	26
	84	50

There were two deaths from Tuberculosis - both were the result of Respiratory Tuberculosis. One case (Respiratory) was removed from the register having been notified as having left the district.

The Tuberculosis Death Rate for the year was 0.22 per 1,000 population compared with 0.66 for the year 1951.

I am

Yours obediently,

DONALD THOMSON.